

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES \$99,595 RURAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE GRANT

Sparta Community Development Organization, Inc. received \$99,595 in a Mock Check ceremony August 23, 2005, at the Sparta High School. The USDA Rural Development Grant funds will be used for infrastructure improvements to the Sparta Industrial Park that will include paving the access road and extending water and wastewater utilities. These improvements will help benefit expansion and additional employment for two private businesses. The Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program allows USDA to finance and facilitate the development of small private enterprises.

"I'm pleased to announce this funding as an investment in the jobs and economic growth in Southwest Missouri," said U.S. Senator Jim Talent, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "Transportation and water infrastructure are vital as we work to attract new businesses and jobs to the area."

"Rural economic development is especially difficult in small communities with limited resources," Congressman Roy Blunt said. "Sparta's community leaders have overcome those challenges with a team effort dedicated to bringing good jobs to the area. The assistance provided by USDA's Rural Development is a critical element in meeting that goal and is a model for other small communities in Southwest Missouri."

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development said, "Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators "Kit" Bond and Jim Talent plus U.S. Representative Roy Blunt for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential services for the community." Branum added, "This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development's mission and President Bush's initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities

President Ken Lupton expressed his appreciation, "The Industrial Park Board is pleased that the USDA has responded positively to our grant request. The benefits of this grant will help with the infrastructure in the Sparta Industrial Park and allow for more jobs in our community. Thank you USDA!"

Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Lynette R. Bilyeu, Rural Development Manager, at 1786 S. 16th Ave, Suite 103, Ozark, MO, 65721 , or by calling (417) 581-3905 extension 4 or by email to lyn.bilyeu@mo.usda.gov



Left to Right: Ken Lupton, Board President of Sparta CDO; Jon Bledsoe, Field Representative for Congressman Blunt; Nathan Correll; Field Representative for Senator Talent; Patrick Morrow, Field Representative for Senator Bond

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